

A PREPARATIVE
FOR
DEATH
AND

ETERNITY;

ing, The Substance of a Discourse,
Delivered at the

FUNERAL

Of a Right Worthy

GENTLEWOMAN

Lately Deceased.



LICENSED, according to Order.

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A Preparative for *Death* and *Eternity*, &c.

luke, xv. ver. 7. *I say unto you that likewise joy shall be in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more then over ninety and nine just persons that need no repentance.*

THIS weighty Work of Repentance, every Soul here present had need to take into consideration, to enter upon it, for when the Lamp of our Lives is extinguished, we immediately drop into the infinite, endless, bottomless Gulph of **Eternity**; which no Line can fathom, no Time can reach, no Age can extend to, no Tongue can express: it is a duration always present; a being always in being: it is one perpetual

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petual Day, which shall never see a
 vening. Many are the Description of
 the Ancients, and divers their Expressi-
 ons concerning this *Eternity*. The *Ægyptians*
 conceived, That God was Eternal,
 and his duration and being to be properly
 termed *Eternity*, represented the Di-
 vine power by a *Circle*, which had nei-
 ther beginning nor end. And hence it
 was, that the Ancient *Romans* Erected
 Temples, which they Dedicated to their
 Gods, in a Circular Figure. Nay, the
Turks every morning ascend into a high
 Tower, built in the fashion of the *Ægyptian*
Pyramids, where they devoutly sa-
 lure their God and *Mahomet*, crying with
 a loud and roaring Voice; *God always*
hath been, and ever will be. Thus we see
 how these miserable Heathens, who had
 no light but Nature, no other Guide but
 those lame and corrupted Principles
 which were left in them after the Fall;
 did, notwithstanding (according to their
 broken and weak apprehensions) tire
 out themselves in the expression of *Eter-*
nity;

nity; however they were unhappily ignorant in the ways of God, in this life, yet they earnestly laboured to know what should become of themselves hereafter, and to find out the state of the life to come. O how justly might I (were it not a digression) take up a Lamentation, and deplore the sad condition of our times! how short do we fall, even to the perfection of Heathens? how few are there (in comparison of the generality of People) that cast forth so much as a thought upon *Eternity*? we live here as if there was no Life hereafter; our Earth is our Heaven, and our Pleasures our Paradise; we crown our Beds with Rosebuds, we eat of the Fat, and drink of the Sweet, and say in our Hearts, no Evil shall happen to us; but when we have done all 'tis nothing but vanity: Heartsease will not grow in this Earthly Garden: the true rest will not be found but in the true place, the Eternal *Jerusalem*: sound and intire Contentment hath no rooting in this VWorld. For as one hath

it excellently ; dispose and marshal all our
things to thy hearts desire, yet shalt thou in
(do what thou canst) still meet with some
cross or pressure in the way. Since this
is so, let us not then terminate our affections
in these earthly things, which are of God
no continuance, but let us lend our Hearts
before us to those Heavenly Mansions
where they shall be Crowned with full
ness of Happiness, and shall swim in his
streams of Pleasures for evermore.

Certainly there is no true rest but that
which is Eternal ; and the sweetest refreshment
that our Souls can find in this
World, consists in the serious Meditation
on of the Joys to come, in devoting ourselves
and all we have in his Service from whom
whom we have them, in trusting to him
and relying on them : for out of God the
Soul finds no resting place to set her foot
on, but only Storms and Waves, Death
and Hell abide her. When we have im-
proved our Contentments, in even the
height of our desires, when we have ob-
tained as much happiness as the worst of

al all can give us; yet then we may perchance
 th in the midlt of our days, when our
 breasts are full of Milk, and our bones full
 of Marrow: or, suppose we spin the
 Thread of our Lives to a longer day, and
 re God Crown us here with the blessing of
 ean his left hand, the comforts of this Life,
 ion and length of Years: yea, though all
 full things favour our longer continuance in
 m in this VWorld, yet in the end, time and
 age will ruine us; we shall bring our
 Years to an end, like a tale that is told,
 it and shall vanish away like a shaddow.
 n though we live many years, and in them
 it all we rejoyce, yet in the end we shall
 g remember the days of Darknes (saith
 from *Solomon*) and the time shall come, that
 he Eye which saw us shall see no more,
 d the Sun sets and riseth again: but we,
 r foolish! when the Glasse is run, and the short
 Deale of our Summers-Day is spent, shall
 e in ever return till our last Summons, when
 e the Dead shall hear the Voice of the Son
 e of God, *and they that hear it shall live and*
come forth of their Graves, they that have
done

done good to the Resurrection of Life, and they that have done evil to the Resurrection of Condemnation, both to Eternity; and then shall follow that large day that shall never shut in; that infinite continuance of Time that shall never have end; that unlimited Eternity, which ever has been, and is, and will be the same forever: when the Sun shall no more give her light by day, nor the Moon her brightness by night, but God shall be our light, and the Lord our Glory.

Oh the unhappy Condition of this Age! who is there that ponders these things with a digested meditation? who looks into the state of his Soul with a serious Eye, and considereth his way that endeavours to lay a good Foundation for the time to come? we stand before the Door of Eternity, and while we are every day entering into it; but a stroke of Death, and we are gone, even in a Moment, and whither? many of our short and fading Delights to an endless, easeless Gulph; where our Way

never Dye, nor our Fire shall ever
our.

Now let all those who swim in the
streams of their Voluptuousness, putting
from them the Evil Day, who labour
to expel from their Hearts and stifle in
their bosoms, the sad Consideration of their
approaching Infelicities; let them I (say)
know, that they may fall into their vast
abyss of Eternity when they least sus-
pect it: into which, when once they
unhappily plung'd themselves, they
desire Redemption but shall not find
it shall be one of their Torments to
know they shall never be out of Tor-
ment: All the Gold of *Ophir* cannot
purchase them one Minute of relief,
nor their inexpressible Misery. But
now, even now is the Jubilee, now is the
appointed time, now is the promulgation
of the Gospel: there remains nothing for
us to do, but to sue it forth; we need
not many hundreds of Years, or num-
bers of Days to Redeem our mispent
Woe and to wash out our contracted
Po-

pollutions, no, one day will (through Gods gracious favour and loving intercession) procure more mercy here, than Eternity of time can obtain hereafter. One sigh from a true sorrowful heart shall Prevail to discharge more debt, than infinite ages shall acquit or satisfy for hereafter ; Here God with patience expects our repentance, but if we abuse his forbearance, and come not hereafter with fear and trembling, we shall abide his Judgment.

O Let us now therefore be wise in time, and remember our Creator in the days of our Youth, before the evil day come, and the years approacheth, when in we shall say, we have no pleasure in them : before our dust return into the womb from whence it came, and our Lungs be locked up into the Breasts of the Earth, before that black and gloomy day, the day of Death and desolation appear to us, the which (if our timely repentance here prevent not our death) will Seal up our Souls to Eternal damnation.

f: Let us consider, that wheresoever
 we are, whatsoever we go about, we
 and every minute of our time in the
 glorious presence of an incomprehensible
 Majesty, whose bright and most piercing
 eye is ten thousand times clearer than
 the Sun, who knows all hearts, sees all
 actions, understands all Counsels views
 of all persons, there's not a Word in the
 tongue, and a thought in the heart, nor
 a spark of Lust in the Flesh, though ne-
 ver so softly blown, and secretly kind-
 led, but he beholds it altogether; he is
 ear to hear, all hand to punish, and
 eye to see, and where he pleases; all power
 to protect, and all grace to pardon, he
 who finds not his Mercy shall feel his fu-
 ry. *And who amongst us can dwell with de-
 viling Fire? who amongst us can dwell
 with everlasting burnings? If they, who
 glory in any notorious Sin, did but
 truly weigh how fast they go towards
 Eternity of torments (since by the
 command or stroke of God, they
 will be unavoidably hurl'd to death and
 de-*

destruction) certainly they would
 for all the Kingdoms in *Europe*, for
 the treasure in *Asia*, nay, not for the
 whole world, defer their repentance
 one hour, much less would they go
 confidently to their Beds, without
 or horror, being so near the Pits
 and lying in the danger of so great a
For what would it profit a Man to gain the
whole world, and lose his Soul? What-
 fore, whatsoever become of all other
 things, let us all have a special care
 the Salvation of our own precious
 Souls:

Secondly, Our heads are filled
 care how we shall live in this World
 when our Souls should be more inqui-
 rive how we shall live out of the world
 for what matter is it, how short
 stock of provisions be here, where
 are breaking up house, and on the point
 of departing? A Man that comes to an
 Inn, if he meet with hard fare, or
 Lodging, it never troubles him, for
 says he, but for a night, I shall away

d morrow ; so our habitations in this
 for world, are but as *Jonahs* Gourd, they
 for shelter us but (as it were) for a night :
 enta care not for Mans day (saith the Apo-
 ey le) and in truth, wherein is it to be
 out regarded ? what is it to that God with
 s by whom we must live for ever ? therefore
 eata are we not whether our Sails be high
 gain or low, or what vain men think of us,
 wh but what the eternal God thinks of us,
 all and what we shall be thought of in that
 care kingdom, where we must live and a-
 pree ide for ever.

1. d Thirly. Did Faith give Men as clear
 s sight of spiritual things, as sence doth
 e We temporal, what manner of lives would
 e inq they live ? how would they be exalted
 he w the world above the world ? I have
 thom st, says one, the favour of such and such
 where eat men, but is there not ten thousand
 a ther mes more sweetness in the favour of
 omes od ? Death saith another, has bereav'd
 re, of my Wife, Children, Friends and
 n, for relations, and whatever was near or
 away ar unto me ; Well, but is not the au-
 thor

author of all our Comforts alive still? will not the light of the Sun content though all our Candles be put out; che up, bare Christ is wealth enough; God be our portion, we enjoy infinitely more then the World can lend us; all creature comforts have but their measure & proportion of goodness in themselves, no Creature hath all good in it. Cloaths serve to warm us, Meats to nourish us, Houses to shelter us, Physicks to Recover us, but God hath all good in himself; he is sight to the Blind, health to the Sick, liberty to the Captive, light to them that sit in Darkness, all things to all Men. They that put their trust in the Lord, saith *David*, shall want no manner of thing that is good. This is very full, no manner of thing that is good: Mark what God said to *Abraham*, *I am thy exceeding great Reward*; and he gave exceeding great Reward to his People. When you take in any Creature-Comforts, you do but sip at Gods Bountie; but when you taste of God himself,

then you have a fullness indeed! *In thy presence is fullness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.*

4. We carry Immortal Souls about us, and therefore we should have Immortal Aims, and Immortal Ends. When Satan shall tender any thing as lovely to thy apprehension, say to him; Will thy pleasure, thy security, thy ease, to which thou invitest my Soul, abide for ever? I cannot be happy but in an Eternal good: that which must fill up all the Chinks of my Soul, must be a pure good, a total good, and an eternal good. If the good I do enjoy, be not pure, and all good: then something must be wanting, and there will be an imperfection; and though it be pure and all good, yet if not unchangeably so, when it is but like a Candle, which at last will be extinguished; and the Consideration that it must end, will diminish my happiness, and abate my contentment. But sure I am, my Saviours Counsel is sweet and saving, and incloseth

B

fullness

fullness of Comfort in it; *Labour for the meat which perisheth, but for the which endureth to Eternal Life.* Since a Portion may be had in Diamonds, why should I set my Heart on Lu-
ber?

5. Some begin to live, when they are about to dye, and this Estate is perilous; for some dye before they begin to live, and this Estate is de-
rate; the speediest work is safest, when thou tradest for Eternity. Too late providence, is often seconded with everlasting Repentance. Many are, who run headlong and blind to their long home, like the Rich-
ton in the Gospel, which never began to open his Eyes and look upward, till he was in torment. All the while he lived on Earth, his Eyes were shut, and when it was too late, namely, when he was thrown to Hell, then he began to look upwards and about him, how many in this our Age go on in a sleeping and easie way, and are never

ble that they are out of the way, till they arrive at the end of their journey; all the misery lies in the close of the day: for out of the Pit there is no Redemption; when once the Soul is split upon this Rock, it gives to the world an Everlasting farewell, according to that of Job, Cap. vii. 9. *As the Cloud vanisheth and goeth away, so he that goeth down to the Grave shall come up no more to his House, neither shall his place know him any more.*

7. It is recorded of *Lazarus*, that after his Resurrection from the Dead, he was never seen to laugh, the stream of his affections were now turned into another Channel: his Thoughts were fixt in Heaven, tho' his Body were on Earth, and therefore he could not but slight Temporal things, when his thoughts were upon Eternal. O that we could but work our hearts and minds to a vehement thirst after Christ! or if Christ be our End, our Joy shall be Endless.

8. The Mind of Man is so much the more sensible of the Evil present, how much the less it meditates on the good to come: for he that looks towards the Reward will villifie the sufferings. *St. Augustine* runs sweetly in his Meditations on this subject. *Eternal Labour*, saith he, *is but an equal Compensation for Eternal Rest*. But if thou shouldst endure this *Eternal Labour* thou couldst never arrive at that *Eternal Rest*: therefore hath the mercy of God ordained thy sorrows to be temporal, that thy joys may be *Eternal*; yet, saith he, *who is there that thinks of God as he ought?* Such thoughts are irksome to us, but for temporal Vanities we think on them with Delight, and Enjoy them with Contentment. And farther, saith he, look in and abroad thy self, see where thou art, God hath bow'd thee (according to thy Calculation) a little time, yet what is the longest time of *Adage* to *Eternity*? yea, though thou shouldst

length

the lengthen out thy days to many hundred of
 years, yet still thou art Transitory, and ex-
 posed to the common condition of all Men.
 s to them fix thy Heart on God; and so enjoying
 that Eternity, thou shalt make thy self E-
 ternal: and be not discouraged for thy
 Tribulation in this world, for such is
 Gods Love towards his Elect, that he
 corrects them, to the end they might
 not be Condemned with the world
 hereafter. Be not therefore (I say) cast
 down with any crosses whatsoever,
 what may befall thee in this life: for the
 things that are present are temporal, but
 the things to come are Eternal: When
 we see the friends of this world, the ea-
 sy embraces of the comforts of this
 world, upon every summons of Death,
 are unable to defer, what they can't utterly
 avoid, their Corporal Dissolution: O
 how great care, what diligence, what
 subtle endeavours should we use, that
 we might live for ever! Let us again
 meditate on these things, and
 with due care foresee Eternity, before
 we

we unexpectedly fall into it. Certain it is, all things pass away in this life, only Eternity hath no period ; let us redeem the time, and work while we have the day, for if we neglect good Duties here, we shall never regain the like opportunity hereafter.

This Life, saith Nazianzen, *is as if* were our Fair-day, our Market-day, let us now buy what we want, while the Fair lasts while we have time, let us do good unto Men. Happy is that Man that so lives here, that the remembrance of his well spent Life, may yield him Joy hereafter.

9. Death is the ending of our day, not of our life ; for when our day shall close, and our time shall be no more, then shall our Death conduct us to Life, which will last for all Eternity, for we dye not here to dye, but to live for ever, therefore the best Guide of Life, is the Consideration of our Death, and he alone leads a Life answerable to his Christian Profession, who daily

pects to leave it. Methinks its strange
Men should be so industriously careful
to avoid their Deaths, and so carelessly
improvident of the Life to come; when
as nothing makes Death bad, but that
Estate which follows it: but the rea-
son is, we are spiritually blind, and see
not, nor know, in this our day, the
things that belongs to our peace; we
have naturally neither sight nor feeling
of the Joys to come: But when God
shall enlighten the Darknes of our
Minds, and reveal his Son to us, when
once the Day dawneth, and that Day-
Star ariseth in our Hearts; Oh then
our Death will be our Joy and the re-
joycing of our Hearts, then shall we in-
finitely desire to be dissolved and be
with Christ.

To Conclude, Let us therefore with
Unwearied endeavours labour to
bring Christ home to our Hearts,
and to keep him there. Let us
dye

dye to our selves and our
 here, that so in the world to come
 we may Everlastingly Live with
 Christ, and in him, with the Saints
 in Glory, for ever and ever. *Amen*

F I N I S